

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ICA16105
BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
AND SPOKANE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE
FAMILY AND JUVENILE COURT
LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (FJCIP)
August 26, 2015**

The following information is provided on behalf of Spokane County Superior Court to maintain compliance with the contract for services between the Administrative Office of the Courts and Spokane County Superior Court for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

ASSIGNMENT OF A CHIEF JUDGE FOR THE FAMILY AND JUVENILE COURT FOR A MINIMUM TERM OF TWO YEARS.

Spokane County has a two year term for the Chief Juvenile Court Judge. Presently, Judge Salvatore Cozza is holding this position.

HIRE A CASE MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

Janell Grubb holds the position of FJCIP/Unified Family Court Coordinator position. She has held this position for five years and has received appropriate training in the area of family and juvenile law.

JUDICIAL OFFICERS SERVING IN THE COUNTY'S FJCIP PROJECT HAVE COMPLETED 30 HOURS OF EDUCATION REQUIRED UNDER RCW 2.56.230.

Six Commissioners and three judges serve in the county's FJCIP Project. All but one judge have completed the minimum 30 hours of specialized education. Judge Clary currently has 12.75 hours completed. Strong efforts are being made get him in compliance with this requirement.

IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLE OF ONE JUDICIAL TEAM HEARING ALL OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN A CASE INVOLVING ONE FAMILY, ESPECIALLY IN DEPENDENCY CASES.

Spokane County transitioned to this model in 2007 and continues to abide by the principle of one judicial team hearing all of the proceedings in a dependency case. Judicial assignments are made to abide by this principle.

SPENDING PLAN: All funds received through the FJCIP Grant funds (\$56,000) shall be used for the salary and benefits of the FJCIP Coordinator. This amount is insufficient in covering the current salary and benefits for the position. If there are any funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year, the balance shall be used for reimbursement of office supplies and postage expenses.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

1. The FJCIP Coordinator shall provide facilitator services for parties involved in both a Dependency and a Family Law matter.

- a. Shall impact both family and juveniles.
- b. This service shall reduce dependency caseload size of Commissioners by resolving cases quicker through assistance with obtaining a parenting plan or 3rd party custody. In some cases, dependencies may be dismissed prior to fact finding with the establishment of 3rd party custody.
- c. The specific UFC principle this project is targeted to meet is *Case Management*.
- d. There are no barriers to implementing this project.
- e. Measurable outcomes for which data will be collected shall be the number of children protected through obtaining a parenting plan or 3rd party custody.

2. The FJCIP Coordinator shall manage the Parents for Parent Program.

- a. The P4P program impacts both family and juveniles.
- b. Parent Allies shall mentor new parents entering the dependency system, conduct an educational class with an overview of the dependency system, and provide on-going support to encourage early engagement in services and inspire change. This program improves court operations through coaching parents to work civilly with stakeholders in the dependency system, increasing parental engagement in the court process, and encouraging early engagement in services with the outcome of reducing length of the dependency and a child's time away from home.
- c. The specific UFC principle this project is targeted to meet is *One Family/One Team*.
- d. The only barrier to this program is financial support.
- e. A pre and post class survey is administered to measure a change in attitude about the dependency system and comments are collected regarding what the individual received from the class. Numbers of attendees are also collected. There has been other research conducted on the P4P program indicating that parents are more likely to engage in services earlier and have a better attitude/working relationship with the dependency stakeholders. The P4P model used in Spokane County is based on the model used in the research to which I am referring.

3. The FJCIP Coordinator shall distribute dependency orders to stakeholders.

- a. Shall impact both family and juveniles.
- b. All dependency orders shall be downloaded and re-distributed to stakeholders to improve communication and timeliness.

- c. The specific UFC principle this project is targeted to meet is *One Family/One Team and Case Management*.
 - d. There are no barriers.
 - e. This practice improves communication with stakeholders regarding hearing dates and information sharing. This is a small improvement that positively impacts the six federally mandated dependency timeliness measures.
- 4. Assign/Reassign Court Commissioners to cases whereby individuals are dually involved in both a Juvenile Court and a Family Law matter to the same Commissioner.**
- a. Shall impact both family and juveniles
 - b. All dependency petitions shall be reviewed and the case history of participants shall be reviewed to determine if they are involved in dual legal matters. If there is a Dependency *and* a Family Law matter, the family law matter will likely be reassigned to the Commissioner handling the Dependency. All dependencies that had a prior dependency shall be assigned to the team which previously managed the dependency case.
 - c. The specific UFC principle this project is targeted to meet is *One Family/One Team*.
 - d. There are no barriers aside from the tedious process of looking up every individual name.
 - e. Cases are assigned/reassigned on a continual basis as new cases are established, or as old cases return to the attention of the court. We could record the number of cases that are reassigned, but unless this data would be beneficial in some way, it is not worth the time to collect the information. It has already been established that one family/one judge is beneficial to case consistency and reduces the amount of review time required for judicial officers.
- 5. Hold a bi-monthly Dependency Working Group meeting to discuss issues that arise in dependencies.**
- a. Shall impact both family and juveniles.
 - b. A bi-monthly Dependency Working Group meeting shall be held with members from each of the stakeholder groups. Agenda items shall be collected in advance from any of the participants to discuss issues that are affecting the dependency process. As issues become identified and resolved to some extent, the subject may pass on to a smaller committee (TED – Team Efficiencies in Dependencies) to iron out details or develop policy to resolve the issue. Service providers will also be invited to share information about their available resource.
 - c. The specific UFC principle this project is targeted to meet is *One Family/One Team and Special Education*.
 - d. There are no barriers.

- e. The outcomes will be improvement in the cohesiveness of team members, improved communication regarding expectations through policy development, awareness of community resources, and the provision of a continuous avenue for discussing dependency issues as they arise. Through continual tweaks in the dependency process, the six federally mandated dependency timeliness issues shall continue to improve.

6. Work with Family Impact Network (FIN) to improve visitation for dependency involved parents

- a. Shall impact both family and juveniles
- b. Meet with FIN personnel to work on issues to improve access, availability, quality and frequency of visitation. Establish a relationship between FIN and the Ally Parents to improve FIN’s knowledge and understanding of the parental experience at visitation centers. This shall aid in making continual improvements to the system.
- c. The specific UFC principle this project is targeted to meet is *One Family/One Team*.
- d. FIN is a privately run organization and new workers have limited experience and knowledge about dependency involved families. There is a shortage of visitation centers, transportation of parents and children is challenging, visitation centers are often inhospitable, and parents are unprepared for visits.
- e. The outcome for working with FIN on visitation issues is an increase in awareness and education about visitation issues. A possible development of a 6 week class on visitation facilitated by an Ally Parent. Increase in numbers of visitation sites. Improvement in the quality of visitation centers. Measurable results could be a comparison of site locations at the beginning of the project, compared to the end of the year. If the class is developed, a pre and post survey could be administered to determine the effectiveness of the class.

Plan to identify those children who have been in foster care for at least 15 of the past 22 months

Children are tracked through a local database and a monthly report is provided to each of the six Commissioners identifying length of time each child has been in foster care. It does not specify continuous care. To improve this area, a monthly list shall be provided to the Commissioners that identify children who have been in care for 12 consecutive months.

This report is submitted by Janell Grubb, current FJCIP Coordinator for Spokane County.

Janell Grubb

August 26, 2015

Janell Grubb

Date